

THE FRESHET.

BY NATHAN D. TRAGER.

Secure from harm among the bills,
We watched the flooded river flow,
Fed by a hundred shouting rills
And gorges heaped with melting snow
We marked the debris of the flood,
The wreck of many a farm and hall—
Haystacks and fences, ricks of wood,
And fragments torn from roof and wall.

At times a hen-coop downward surged,
With hapless chicks as castaways,
At times a cottage, half submerged,
Went nodding down the water-ways.
A barn door eddied through the fog,
And near it, in the refuse fouled,
A poor forlorn Newfoundland dog
Tugged at his kennel chain and howled.

We drew our boat upon the shore,
And feared to dare the turbid tide,
Until above the fresher's roar
The women of our party cried,
"A baby in its crib afloat!"
See—by that black and tossing beam!"
Without a word, we launched our boat,
And headed for the central stream.

'Twas doubtful which would stronger prove,
The running wave or struggling oar,
But still with might and main we strove,
Watched by the women on the shore.
A feeble cry, a wailing sent
Above the shipwrecked cradle's side,
Renewed us to our utmost bent,
And still we fought the rushing tide.

We reached the little voyager
Just as his raft to piecemeal went,
And happier shouts there never were
Than those which o'er the stream we sent.
We wrapped him warm, and ashoreward steered,
We strove to still his plaintive cries;
And when he crowed, we laughed and cheered,
And bore him to the shore a prize.

That was for us a day of days,
Though many a neighbor lost his all,
For "Willie Wolf" around us plays,
The life and light of hut and hall.
Orphaned, he hath a hundred sires,
In every cot a mother good;
We love him by our autumn fires,
But mostly when the stream's flood
With spring-tide thaw of gorge and hill,
And all the waters are at strife,
We clasp him closer, closer still,
And bless the chance that saved his life.

FACTS ABOUT FIGURES.

Most nations have, more or less perfectly followed a decimal system. Nature seems to have taught her children almost instinctively to count with their fingers. Hence it has been taught by some that the very word finger is connected with the root of five, and digit with ten. In counting on the fingers, it may be observed that some people are in the habit of using both hands, others only one. The one method contains the root of the denary scale, the other of the far less common and less convenient quinary. There are a few traces to be found of the third natural scale,—the vicenary, derived from the number of fingers and toes taken together. If any nation ever did follow out the vicenary system, we may be sure that their toes were more agile than ours are wont to be, not cramped and deformed by wearing boots. Results of treating twenty as a base are seen in the English expression "a score," and the French "quatre-vingt." It is very remarkable that, though every nation of the civilized world has more or less, whether in ancient or modern times, adopted ten as its standard, not one in forming its numerals has been perfectly consistent. Especially have most languages a difficulty in getting over eleven and twelve without a sacrifice of consistency. Whether eleven means one-ten, or one-left-over, it is clear that we have gone to a different root for our first syllable. And both these numerals are formed on a different plan to thirteen, &c. The French are far less symmetrical. From eleven to sixteen, they are content to hint at the element ten by the termination *se*. Then they transmute, and proceed with the ten first. Twenty to sixty are pretty much on one model; but seventy changes, and eighty is vicenary. However, septante is quite a common provincialism, and I believe octante has been found. The Spanish *diez y seis* (sixteen) interrupts our numeral sooner than the French; *setenta* and *ochenta* are regular. The plan of the German numeral is so nearly that of the English, that only one remark need be made. If *hopp* is right, the English *ty* in twenty, &c., is not ten, but a Sanscrit suffix. In that case we are nearer to the original Aryan than are the Germans in *zwanzig*. I make the remark with extreme diffidence, but, as a true-born Briton, eagerly grasp at any and every sign that our language, even in its Teutonic element, is not a mere derivative of the German. Turning to the Latin numerals, we find eleven and twelve formed with almost perfect regularity; only *undecim* is formed from the root of *unus*, *undecim* by joining the ordinary form of the second numeral to the modified termination

decim. All goes smooth to seventeen; then we have a new form, *duodeviginti*, eighteen is *undeviginti*. It is remarkable that *duo* hardly differs from the Sanscrit, *dvayinshati*. The Greeks form eleven and twelve on a different pattern to thirteen, &c., omitting the conjunction in the one case, inserting it in the other. Their thirteen is compounded, rather absurdly, with the adverb, *trice* and *ten*. Their eighteen and nineteen accord with ours rather, and differ from the Sanscrit and Latin pattern. Their twenty and thirty have a different termination. One more language I will refer to. In Turkish there is a trace of the quinary scale. One to five are monosyllables; six to nine, dissyllables and compounds. For the rest they follow the denary scale learnt from the Arabs. Eleven and twelve are perfectly regular, and so on to twenty. Here another remnant of quinary influence. Twenty to fifty are words having no connection with the simple numerals, but sixty to ninety are modified from six, &c., to nine. Something of the same kind has been observed, I believe, in the numerals of certain South Sea Islanders, perhaps not only disconnected with similarity of origin. Max Müller, if I mistake not, counts these languages akin to the Turanian stock, of which Turkish is the usual example, though surely many Turkish forms approach very closely to inflection.—*Once a Week*.

FATTENING YOUNG WOMEN.

Throughout the interior of Africa, and, indeed, in some parts of Asia, a woman is prized for fatness. Beauty is associated with excessive obesity; and such being public sentiment, mothers seasonably commence a system of dietetic treatment that makes their daughters irresistible. Colonel Keating gives an account of the process of fattening young women for a Tunis market. As soon as betrothed, she is cooped up in a small room, with gold shackles on her ankles. If her proprietor has lost a wife by death, or divorced one, their anklets are sent forward for the new matrimonial candidate. When she has attained a desirable size, indicated by filling the pattern rings, she is carried in triumph to her new home.

The preparatory of food that actually produces the coveted dimension—mountain of fatness—is called draught, made of the seed of a vegetable peculiar to the country. Some positively die from excessive fatness in an effort to surpass in that bewitching accomplishment rival candidates for matrimonial positions. These famous mortals are not the poor girls. They are the highest orders of society, and therefore are ambitious, like fashionables in some civilized States, of securing an elevated position with a rich husband. Bruce, the traveler, saw a great queen in Africa—a gem of a woman, the envy of her sex—and wife hunters—who weighed over four hundred pounds.

Can science explain the actions of these seeds philosophically.

MOTHER GOOSE NOT A MYTH.

W. L. Stone writes from New York to the *Providence Journal*—

In the January number of the *Strawson* appears a well-written and interesting paper entitled "Mother Goose's Melodies." In the first paragraph is the sentence: "Here the traditional bard is Mother Goose, of whom nothing certain is known. But more than the name history does not reveal." In this statement, however, the writer is in error; for so far from "Mother Goose" being a creature of fancy, she was, we beg to assure him, a veritable personage.

The mother-in-law of Thomas Fleet, the editor, in 1781, of the *Boston Weekly Beacon*, was none other than the original Mother Goose—the Mother Goose of the world-famous melodies. Mother Goose belonged to a wealthy family in Boston, where her eldest daughter, Elizabeth Goose, was married by Cotton Mather, in 1715, to Fleet, and in due time gave birth to a son. Like most mothers-in-law in our own day, the importance of Mrs. Goose increased with the appearance of her grandchild, and poor Mr. Fleet, half-distracted with her endless nursery ditties, finding all other means fail, tried what ridicule could effect, and actually printed a book with the title, "Songs for the Nursery, or Mother Goose's Melodies for Children, printed by T. Fleet, at his printing house, Padding Lane, Boston. Price, ten coppers."

Mother Goose was the mother of nineteen children, and hence we may easily trace the origin of that famous classic:—

"There was an old woman who lived in her shoe,
She had so many children she didn't know
what to do."

A good story relating to Lord Selborne has been going the rounds of the Bar. A few days ago a favourite parrot of his lordship made its escape into a garden, and perched itself on a high tree. Great was the consternation of the servants when they found that they could not induce the traitor bird to return. At length the escape was made known to the Lord Chamberlain, who at once went into the garden and placed himself in view of the parrot. Polly instantly alighted on his lordship's shoulder, and, looking him in the face, said in its gentlest tones—
"Let us pray!"

ST. AGNES' DAY AT HOME.

This is St. Agnes' Day. Do you know what that is? No? Well, then, St. Agnes, like Mary, always had a "little lamb," and on the 18th of January two little lambs are blessed by the pope in honor of St. Agnes. They were very beautiful. Two little white lambs, without spot or blemish, and washed perfectly clean, were brought into the church of St. Agnes on cushions, then placed on the altar, and after the ceremony of high mass were blessed by the bishop, after which they were sent to the pope for his blessing. Their legs were tied together, with red ribbons, and their bodies decorated with the monogram of St. Agnes (S. A.), also in red ribbon. One of them remained very quiet, but the other did not seem to relish the smoke of the incense and struggled hard to escape, but the ribbons were too strong for him. They were brought in by full-robed priests, and after the blessing were taken in a carriage to the Vatican to receive the pope's benediction. They were then sent to the convent to be reared by the nuns of Agnes until next summer, when their fleeces will be taken off and placed in a vase over St. Peter's chair until the wool is sanctified, after which it is used in some part of the pontifical robes. As this takes place every year, there is, of course, more wool than the pope needs. The balance is sent to the bishops and others throughout the world on whom the pope wishes to bestow some special mark of favor. After shearing, the lambs are served up as chops for the pope's table.

GOLDEN GRAINS.

EVERYBODY who lifts doesn't find the jewel.
MEN magnify trifles till they are frightened at them.

RELIGION on the tongue and self in the heart is the way of the world.

LET the kingdom of self be well governed before you talk about a republic.

TRUTHS lie scattered broadcast through the ages, waiting willing eyes to see them.

TRACHEARY is the most unpardonable of crimes; it saps all the foundations of society.

EXPERIENCE is the pocket-compass that few think of consulting till they have lost their way.

SUCCESS is not as hard to bear as failure; yet many men show their best qualities in times of defeat, and are incomprehensibly mean in prosperity.

NATIONS which encourage spying will ere long be enslaved. Espionage is an antidote which, in the end, is found to be worse than the disease.

WRITE your name with kindness, love, and mercy on the hearts of the people you come in contact with year by year, and you will never be forgotten.

NOTHING more effectually convicts the conceited man of the vanity of his pretensions than to be ill for a month, and then observe how perfectly well the world gets on without him.

SUNLIGHT is an element of cheerfulness. Let it into the sick chamber. Often put the patient into the sun-bath—the direct rays—and note the good effect. Remember the plants in the dark become stinky.

To be a master builder, your materials must be good, the foundation securely laid, and the superstructure duly proportioned; then the future will affirm your knowledge to have been accurate and your judgment sound.

CONCIT is usually seen during our first investigations after knowledge; but time and accurate research teach us that not only is our comprehension limited, but knowledge itself is so imperfect as not to warrant vanity.

INFINITE toil would not enable you to sweep away a mite; but by ascending a little, you may look over it altogether. So it is with our moral improvement. We wrestle fiercely with a vicious habit, which would have no hold on us if we ascended into a higher moral atmosphere.

A PERSON may be exceedingly agreeable at home, and not be at all so abroad; but many a pleasant, bantering, twittering creature, who makes music away from home, is dull and aborn of her winsome ways at home. The best manners to cultivate are those which make home the most attractive.

NEVER lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful. Beauty is God's handwriting—a way-side sacrament; welcome it in every fair face, every fair sky, every fair flower, and thank Him for it, the fountain of loveliness; and drink it in, simply and earnestly, with your eyes; it is a charmed draught, a cup of blessing.

A WELL-ORGANIZED man or woman cannot live long and happily without congenial employment, and so it is of importance that young men and women should find out early what they can do best, and then prepare themselves to do it. Most of our happiness comes from work done in the spirit of love; most of our unhappiness comes from work done in the spirit of hate.

FAMILY MATTERS.

CHEAP SPONGE-CAKE PUDDING.—Soak three penny sponge-cakes in a little milk, and mix them with the juice and grated peel of half a lemon, a piece of butter, a very little loaf sugar, and one egg. Beat all together, and bake half an hour in a quick oven.

BEEF LIVER FOR GRAVY.—The liver must be first hung up to drain; after that, salt it well and leave it twenty-four hours in a dish. Then hang it up to drain, and when it has ceased dripping, hang it in a dry place for use. It is excellent for gravy to outlets and all made dishes.

VEAL OLIVES.—Cut some moderately thin slices of fillet of veal, or sirloin of beef, spread a layer of forcement over, roll up very lightly, and brush with egg and bread crumbs, then fry a deep brown; afterwards stew gently in a rich gravy, and serve in the same. This will be found a most excellent dish, if the directions are precisely followed.

BAKED HADDOCK.—Thoroughly clean and dry the haddock, fill the inside with veal stuffing, sew it up, and curl the tail into its mouth. Brush it over with egg, and strew bread-crumbs over it. Set it in a warm oven to take about half an hour, but if a Dublin Bay haddock it will require double that time. Serve it on a dish without a napkin, with anchovy or melted butter.

TO CLEAN MERINO.—Grate two or three large potatoes; add to them a pint of cold water; let them stand for a short time, and pour off the liquor clear, when it will be fit for use. Lay the merino on a flat surface, and apply the liquid with a clean sponge, till the dirt is completely extracted; dip each piece into a pailful of clean water, and hang it up to dry without wringing. Iron whilst damp, on the wrong side. It will then appear almost equal to new.

LIP SALVE.—Take two ounces of oil of sweet almonds, half an ounce of white wax, and half an ounce of rosewater; set a mortar in a vessel containing boiling water, and put in the wax; cut into very small pieces into the mortar. When the wax has melted, take it out of the mortar, and add the oil by degrees, beating with the pestle until it is cool; then mix the rosewater with the mass. If it is desired to be colored, rub up a little carmine with the oil before mixing it with the wax.

GUM STARCH.—Pound two ounces of fine white gum arabic to powder; put it into a jug, and pour on it a pint or more of boiling water, according to the degree of tenacity required; cover the jug, and let it remain for the night. On the following morning, pour the liquid carefully from the dregs into a clean bottle, cork it, and keep it for use. A tablespoonful of this, stirred into a pint of starch which has been made in the usual manner, will give to shirt fronts, wristbands, collars, etc., a fine gloss which not only enhances their appearance, but tends to preserve them for a longer period than ordinarily.

A BEER STEW.—Cut away all the skin and fat from two or three pounds of the rump of beef, and divide it into pieces about two or three inches square; put it into a stewpan, and pour on it a quart of broth; then let it boil, and sprinkle in pepper and salt to taste; when it has boiled gently, or simmered two hours, shred finely the peel of a large lemon, and add it to the gravy; in twenty minutes pour in a flavoring, composed of two spoonfuls of Harvey's sauce, the juice of the lemon, one spoonful of flour, and a little ketchup. Add at pleasure a glass of sherry, a quarter of an hour after flavoring it, and serve.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL
QUODS—WOND

CEMENT OF CHALK AND SOLUBLE GLASS.—If fine chalk be well stirred in soluble glass, a cement may be produced, which will harden in the course of six or eight hours. The addition of powdered sulphuret of antimony will give rise to a black mass, susceptible of a high polish, and capable of receiving a fine luster. Fine iron-dust gives a grey-black mass of great hardness. Zinc castings can, it is said, be readily repaired by a paste of soluble glass and zinc dust.

IMPROVEMENT IN PUDDLING IRON.—According to *The Journal of the Franklin Institute*, a successful experiment has been made in Germany in the direction of improving the qualities of pig iron, by puddling in contact with a small percentage of fluor spar. The object of this is to remove the phosphorus of the iron, to which its objectionable qualities are due; and the result, it is said, has been to produce a fibrous bar iron, not at all cold-short, although the pig iron employed was of poor quality, in consequence of containing a large proportion of phosphorus.

A SUBSTITUTE FOR COAL.—Sheffield, it is said, is about to give to the world a greater benefactor than Watt. The price of coal has been one of the great questions of the hour, and the probable exhaustion of the coal-fields has made those interested in possibly very uncomfortable. Now we are to get a substitute, and one, too, of which there is an unlimited supply. If air, as is proposed, can be used as fuel, neither colliers, nor coalowners, nor railway companies will have us at their mercy, and our tempers will, as a matter of course, be much improved. Mr. Wright's invention for warming and light-